

12/14/06
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Day Labor Community Advisory Committee

City of Austin

Interim Progress Report

*Promoting Harmony and Fairness between Austin's
Workers, Employers and Residents*

Executive Summary

To Provide Policy and Strategy Recommendations to City Council

The Beginning

In May of 2006 the DLCAC received its appointments and received its charge to produce a report to Council of recommendations regarding the operations of Austin's Day Labor Centers and Day Labor Policy as outlined in City Ordinance number 20051215-052. The Committee set out on a three phased plan:

- 1** Learn the necessary laws and procedures
- 2** Research Day Labor Center facts, expertise and history
- 3** Produce the report as per Council specifications

Changes

The Committee received a request from Council to evaluate the recommendations of a proposed site at 2101 East Ben White and, if the Committee found it appropriate, to recommend alternative sites.

The Report

The original Ordinance included a request for an interim progress report. Below is a list of what the Committee has done and the status of the various tasks:

Committee Tasks

Training of Laws and Procedures: Status- Completed

The Laws of the State of Texas require that Committee Members take an oath of office, undergo formal training in the laws regarding Open Meetings, Open Records and Conflicts of Interests. Under the guidance of City Staff this has been completed. Policies regarding absences, public comment and meetings were adopted and subcommittees were created.

Research Status. Ongoing

In order to advance our project, we deemed it necessary to learn a great deal about all stakeholders, the experience of Austin and other governmental entities in operating Day Labor Centers and to compare current our current practices with several recommendations of best practices. Research falls basically into two categories: published analysis and anecdotal and local direct information.

Formal Research Presentations: Completed thus Far

Staff presentation on the purpose of the City's Day Labor program and its history and the criteria for finding and establishing another Center

From UCLA, Dr Abel Valenzuela's study on the sociology, economics and demographics of Day Laborers

Presentation by James Gamez of Capitol Metro on services to proposed Ben White site and current and proposed Capitol Metro services in general

National Day Labor Organizing Network's Best Practices

Different Day Labor Center Implementations, Emily Timm, Worker's Defense Center

City of Austin's Policies and Practices regarding Real Estate and general observations on the Austin market by Dean Harris, City Staff

Direct Research: Ongoing

Tours and visits to observe operations

- Proposed Day Labor Center on East Ben White (twice)

- Informal Day Labor Sites

- Current Day Labor Center (3 times)

- Possible Day Labor Sites in South Austin (twice)

- Interviewed current First Worker's Center staff

Public Opinion

- Review prior City surveys

- Meeting with neighbors and neighborhood representatives of East Ben White locations

- Employer Survey in public test distribution

- Worker Survey in last draft stage

New Center Selection Recommendation

- Selection Criteria Almost Complete, criteria selected, priorities set, may fine-tune matrix Agreed on characteristics that would disqualify a property

- Met extensively with the City's Real Estate for briefings on legalities, the status of the market, how to evaluate properties, etc

Toured possible area, set target area boundaries and agreed on preferred locations within that area

Reviewing on-line and newspaper listings and several times a week are driving the desired neighborhoods

Reviewed over 60 sites directly investigating the sites that have some possibilities

We have produced an interim rank ordering of the available properties as a guide to the Real Estate Department's preliminary negotiations with owners and agents. We have identified some worthwhile possibilities and the City is in preliminary negotiations with the property owners or their agents.

Please note It is our intent to produce a list of properties, rank-ordered by our selection matrix in order of desirability. We feel that some characteristics in a property such as proximity and transportation for the Day Laborers and safe traffic, maneuver room and access for employers are absolutely essential. Thus far, finding an appropriate site has not been easy. We do not think that the City should make either a six-figure or a long term investment in a property that may not serve its purpose. We will list the best properties we have found but we do reserve the right to say that the best of them may not be good enough.

Updated Timeline and Schedule

Meetings and Tasks

The Committee requests an extension of our mandate in order to fulfill the duties outlined in Part 3 of Ordinance No. 20051215-052. We will continue to meet on the Second Tuesday of each month and each meeting will be devoted to covering the best practice topics that will be included in the final recommendation about City of Austin's Day Labor Program.

- ❖ **January** *New site input* Report on Employer and Worker questionnaires about the new site, as well as community concerns from Public Hearing. By end of January we will provide a written recommendation for the location of the new southern day labor center.
- ❖ **February: Operations and Best Practices.** Discuss recommendations on new site operations and RFP process. Evaluate best practices in City Ordinances and Policies concerning day labor protections.
- ❖ **March: Neighborhood Issues** Neighborhood subcommittee will report on Best Practices from the community perspective.
- ❖ **April: Alliances for Service Delivery** Partnerships and cooperation in day labor sites. The committee will evaluate and recommend potential partnerships with service providers.

❖ **May: *Employer Issues and Worker Issues*** The Committee will hear testimony of employers of day laborers and make recommendations for fulfilling their needs. Testimony and report of the Austin Area day labor study, testimony from workers and recommendations for best services to workers

❖ **June. *Final report production***

Summary

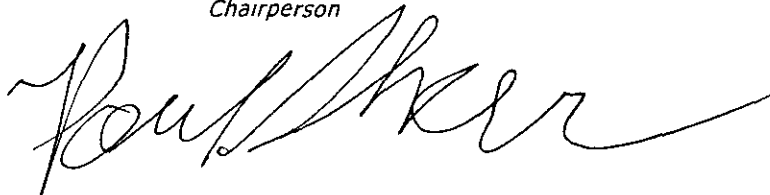
The Committee feels we have made significant progress and that we are prepared to produce results that will meet the Council's specifications on the schedule as outlined below. The Committee intends to do a thorough job of research, obtain all available public input and produce recommendations that will be effective and economical, will serve the public interest and continue Austin's leadership in this area. We are also committed to reports that make our methodology transparent and explain our rationales. This schedule reflects a considerable delay for three reasons:

- 1 The Committee did not start in January, but in June of this year
- 2 The issue of recommending a second site was not in our original charge
- 3 The Committee is not at full strength because it has had some resignations

I would like to add a personal note as Chairperson. I expect outstanding results because the members of the Committee have given of their time very generously and bring outstanding capabilities to the table. The Staff has been patient, supportive, thorough and effective. I am very proud of everyone's contribution thus far, and I think I have every reason to expect this fine level of commitment.

Paul Sherr

Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Sherr", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

12-12-06